

Pritchard Building  
207-211 Bank Street  
Waterbury  
New Haven County  
Connecticut

HABS No. CT-408

HABS  
CONN,  
5-WATB,  
16-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

PRITCHARD BUILDING

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CONN,  
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16 -

Location: 207-211 Bank Street, Waterbury, New Haven  
County, Connecticut

USGS Waterbury Quadrangle, Universal  
Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18.162260.  
46001750

Present Owner: Waterbury Renewal and Economic Development  
Agency  
Leavenworth Street  
Waterbury, Connecticut 06702

Present Occupant: Vacant

Significance: The Pritchard Building, built for and  
initially operated by one of Waterbury's  
older and wealthier families, is one of three  
city buildings built in the Richardsonian  
Romanesque style. The building's textured  
masonry is bold, and the visual effect of  
alternating granite and brownstone dramatic.  
The design is attributed to the prolific  
Connecticut architect, Joseph A. Jackson.

Perhaps more valuable than the individual  
significance of the Pritchard Building is its  
place within the Bank Street Historic  
District: a contiguous row of large,  
multi-story buildings set close to the  
sidewalk, highly decorative and diverse in  
style, yet closely related in size, scale,  
and materials. Together the four buildings  
are typical of Waterbury's commercial  
architecture at the turn of the century.  
They also represent the city's prosperity and  
its economic growth during that period.

PART 1. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: 1888-1891.
2. Architect: Attributed, on the basis of stylistic similarities, to Waterbury architect Joseph A. Jackson. Born in 1861, he was a second generation Irishman and a second generation architect. Jackson designed many Waterbury buildings, of which St. Patricks Hall (1889) is also in the polychromatic Richardsonian Romanesque style. At the time the Pritchard Building was built, Jackson was working in the office of R.W. Hill, but eventually set up a practice of his own with offices in New Haven, New York, and Waterbury. Jackson was a member of the prestigious Architectural Club of New Haven, and is widely represented as an architect in Connecticut. Having the Roman Catholic Church as a major client, he designed many, if not most, of the large brick buildings erected by the church throughout the state in its turn-of-the-century expansion.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which the structure stands. Reference is to the Clerk's Office of Waterbury, New Haven County, Connecticut.

1901 Deed, February 1, 1901, recorded in Volume 170, p. 166.  
Katherine and Sarah Pritchard to J. Howard Whittemore

1938 Mortgage Foreclosure, March 30, 1938, recorded in Volume 492, p. 10.  
Nathan Spiegel and David Kaplan to New York Life Insurance.

1943 Deed, December 29, 1943, recorded in Volume 532, p. 540.  
Martin Rubin to Isabelle Greenblatt for 119-219 Bank Street.

1960 Deed, June 29, 1960, recorded in Volume 798, p. 363.  
Isabelle and Lewis Greenblatt to Alexander Burger.

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1972 Deed, May 19, 1972, recorded in Volume 1037, p. 263.

Alexander Burger to City of Waterbury.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: No information found.
5. Original plans and construction: No original drawings, plans, or early photographs have been located.

All original interior partitions and stairs have been removed, though examination of the structure suggests an original central stairhall running east-west and connecting all floors. The building's footprint and exterior walls appear essentially unaltered.

6. Alterations and additions: Originally free-standing, the Pritchard Building was flanked on its northside in 1902, and southside in 1904, becoming what was called the Pritchard Block. The 1902 structure is no longer standing, and one can now see the facade's quoin returns and window/door infills dating from this 1902 addition and later alterations.

Interior alterations have been extensive, leaving not much more than a shell. All upper floors of the Pritchard and its neighboring structure (213-219 Bank Street) were formerly used for office furniture storage; consequently, all interior partitions and vertical circulation were removed to facilitate the building's use as a warehouse.

Other alterations include several different periods of storefront modernizations. Physical evidence reveals two centered cast-iron columns supporting rosette-decorated I-beams and tie plates, presumably part of the original storefront. Subsequent alterations have covered these cast-iron details with a glass transom, and, more recently, plywood sheathing and a modern display window.

B. Historical Context:

The Pritchard Building, built between 1884 and 1891, is sited on what was once part of the Pritchard family homestead, a large corner lot bordering both Bank and Grand streets. Following Henry C. Griggs' example, the Pritchard heirs built this income-producing commercial property on their old homestead lot. The first small

businesses who rented spaces included a jewelry store and confectionary.

In 1901, Katherine and Sarah Pritchard sold the building and adjoining land, known as Pritchard's Block, to John Howard Whittemore who developed the area further.

By 1943 the Greenblatt family, who owned much real estate in Waterbury, had bought the entire property (199-219 Bank Street). It subsequently became known to Waterbury residents as the Davis & Nye Block. During this middle-half of the century, the Pritchard Building (in conjunction with the Whittemore Building, 213-219 Bank Street) served as office furniture storage while the ground floor remained small retail shops.

In 1972 the City of Waterbury bought, condemned, and slated the Pritchard Building for demolition. Concerned citizens, in an attempt to save Waterbury's central business district's historic architecture from demolition, formed the group WATCH: Waterbury Action to Conserve our Heritage, Inc. WATCH brought a suit against the City's Urban Renewal Agency and HUD in 1978, arguing that national review procedures must be followed before the demolition of any historic property. In 1979, under the National Historic Preservation Act, the U.S. Second District Court of Appeals ruled that as long as federal agencies retain funding control, they must consider the effect of their projects on historic properties. In other words, Waterbury's Urban Renewal Agency, still under contract with HUD, could only raze buildings declared not eligible for the National Register by the National Advisory Council on Historic Places. The court's ruling in favor of WATCH set a national precedent for towns owning historic properties.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Pritchard Building is one of three Richardsonian Romanesque commercial buildings in Waterbury. Its facade is a good example of that style: rough-surfaced polychrome stonework, round-arched forms, and medieval ornament.
2. Condition of the fabric: The exterior masonry is in fair condition with some loss of facade details, minor brick spalling, and incongruous window and door

infills. All interior partitions, stairs, and their bearing walls have been removed. The four floors and basement have all experienced moderate to severe water damage. The roof is in need of replacement.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The four-story, two-bay building is almost rectangular in plan with a one-story 20'-0" by 30'-0" rear wing. The main building portion measures 31'-0" wide by 53'-9" (north wall) and 51'-9" (south wall) deep and 50'-0" high. The 2'-0" discrepancy is due to the west facade which is angled to parallel Bank Street. (See Site Plan, page 11.)
2. Foundation: The foundation is of large rough-cut fieldstones measuring 2'-6" thick.
3. Walls: The west facade is a rough-hewn masonry veneer of alternating (Portland, Connecticut?) brownstone and light-grey granite blocks. Heavy brownstone lintels mark the first and second stories, while the third-story windows are separated by their round-headed fourth-story counterparts with a checkerboard pattern of small square granite and brownstone blocks. Granite and brownstone quoins run up the corners and middle of this facade, ending in alternating brownstone and granite voussiors which form an arch above each bay on the fourth floor.

The north and east walls are of red brick laid in a standard running bond with an alternate header every seventh course. The south side, now a party wall, is also of red brick with the same coursing as both the north and east walls.

4. Structural system and framing: This building is framed with 2"x10" wooden joists running north-south which in the basement are supported on brick bearing walls. On the first floor, a 4'-0" off-center line of metal columns supports I-beams which in turn support the wooden ceiling/floor joists. Formerly, the joist system on the upper floors was supported on bearing walls surrounding a central stairhall. All such walls have now been removed and replaced with short wooden beams supported on wooden posts. The low-pitched gable roof, visible from the east, is of simple 2"x12" wood rafter construction pocketed into the north and south exterior brick walls.

5. No porches, stoops, balconies, or bulkheads.
6. Chimneys: There is one attached plain red-brick chimney running outside and up the building's north-east corner.
7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: There are two entrances to the building. The first, in the center of the west street facade, is a non-original storefront doorway of aluminum-framed glass. The second, in the center of the east-side one-story wing, is a brick segmental-arch doorway, 3'-6" x 10'3", framed in wood with a transom above; both the original door and the transom light are missing.
- b. Windows and shutters: Existing windows on the first floor west elevation include a non-original storefront window and a leaded-glass transom above. The upper floors of the same elevation each have four windows organized as two bays of two paired openings. The sashes are wood-framed one-over-one double-hung with four arched window bays on the fourth floor.

The east elevation window openings are ordered in a similar fashion, though the surrounds, differing in material, all include 4" rise segmental-arches and 6" high granite sills. All are boarded up.

On the north elevation, windows were once the same in style as the east, but many now have masonry infills and lack the symmetry of either the west or east elevations.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The roof is a low-pitched gable with a flat masonry parapet to the west extending above the gable's ridge. The cover is non-original built-up roofing with painted sheet-metal coping.
- b. Cornice, eaves: From Bank Street, the parapet obscures the building's gabled roof as it rises about 3'0" above the ridge. This parapet consists of two tiers of recessed granite panels. At the ends are short towers with pyramidal roofs ending in brownstone finials.

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The east gable end and north and south eaves are both articulated with simple brick dentils and corbeling.

Most storm water runs directly off the roof without any drain or gutter system. The south roof portion pitches down to join roofs with 213-219 Bank Street where the only formal drainage system for these two buildings is located.

c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: See II.B.b.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: See pages 11 through 17.
2. Stairways: The original central stairs and stairhall have been removed. No vertical circulation exists within the building.
3. Flooring: Physical evidence on the upper floors suggests 3" wide wood flooring. But due to water damage and long-term neglect it is difficult to determine the precise material and finish of the original.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: In limited areas on the third and fourth floor, physical remnants include plaster walls and 3'-6" high narrow-board wainscoting. Both finishes are painted a variety of different colors.
5. Openings:
  - a. Doorway and doors: There are no remaining doors. Various sized openings do exist on all floors in the south party-wall.
  - b. Windows: Most window frames on the upper floors have simple painted-wood molding and bulls-eye corner blocks. There is a small 2'-0"x4'-0" skylight on the fourth floor that is in poor condition.
6. Decorative features and trim: None except those described above.
7. Hardware: There is no remaining, original, or notable hardware.



8. Mechanical equipment:

- a. HVAC: All remaining HVAC equipment is located in the basement; hook-ups to the upper floors appear to have been removed. The only notable feature is a 1'-0" deep brick-surfaced pit located in the basement's middle area. This presumably once housed the building's furnace or boiler.
- b. Lighting: There are no remaining original lighting fixtures.
- c. Plumbing: No sanitary mains can be found. The sprinkler main is located in the basement's north-west corner, and hooks up to the street above.

9. Alterations to be constructed in 1987-88: The Pritchard Building will include both new retail and office spaces. The first floor will accomodate two retail shops, accessible from two central doorways behind the existing cast-iron columns. The upper floors will each have one office space, accessed from a ramped corridor which connects all four buildings. All joists and rafters will be reinforced, and new columns will replace the old. Exisiting walls will be patched where necessary.

Exterior work will follow appropriate and recommended restoration methods. New construction will be limited to the non-original storefront features. Boarded and infilled windows will be replaced with double-hung sashes.

D. Site:

- 1. General setting and orientation: The Pritchard Building is the northernmost of four remaining turn-of-the-century commercial buildings, now forming the Bank Street Historic District. The district is located between Grand Street and Interstate 84. The National Register's Inventory- Nomination form for this district describes the site: "The boundaries of the district reflect the physical isolation of these buildings from the rest of Waterbury's downtown. Formerly the district was a continuation of the commercial area which extends west on Grand Street and north on Bank, but today strong visual interruptions make these four buildings a cohesive unit which stands better on its own."

2. Historic landscape design: The Pritchard Building stands flush with Bank Street's sidewalk and is contiguous with the buildings to the south.
3. Outbuildings: None.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: None.
- B. Historic views: None to be found or known.
- C. Interviews: None.
- D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Clerk's Office of the City of Waterbury, Waterbury, Connecticut. Waterbury Land Records.

Waterbury Action to Conserve Our Heritage, Inc. Scrapbook. Historic preservation activities in Waterbury: 1974-1986. Compiled by WATCH treasurer Elsie Ruffleth. Waterbury, Connecticut.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Anderson, Joseph, ed. The Town and City of Waterbury, Connecticut. From the Aboriginal Period to the Year 1985. Volume II. New Haven: The Price and Lee Company, 1986.

Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford, Connecticut. Historic Resources Inventory Form. "Waterbury Architectural Survey." 1978.

Mattatuck Museum, Waterbury, CT. Waterbury Action to Conserve Our Heritage (WATCH). "Central District Rehabilitation Study." 1980.

Pape, William J. History of Waterbury and the Naugatuck Valley, Connecticut. Chicago, New York: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1918, 3 volumes.

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. National Register of Historic Places. Inventory-Nomination Form: "Bank Street Historic District, Waterbury, CT."

Waterbury Renewal and Economic Development Agency,  
Waterbury, CT. "Central Business District Project  
Historic Survey." 1978.

- E. Likely sources not yet investigated: None known.
- F. Supplemental material: Graphic Documentation, see pages 11 through 17.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Buckingham Square Associates, in cooperation with Waterbury Renewal and Economic Development Agency and the United States Department of the Interior's National Park Service, has undertaken to rehabilitate and restore the Bank Street Historic District. The district lies on the edge of Waterbury's busiest commercial neighborhood. The object of the project is to rehabilitate the four buildings so they will once again be part of that neighborhood, and at the same time to preserve a part of Waterbury's architectural history.

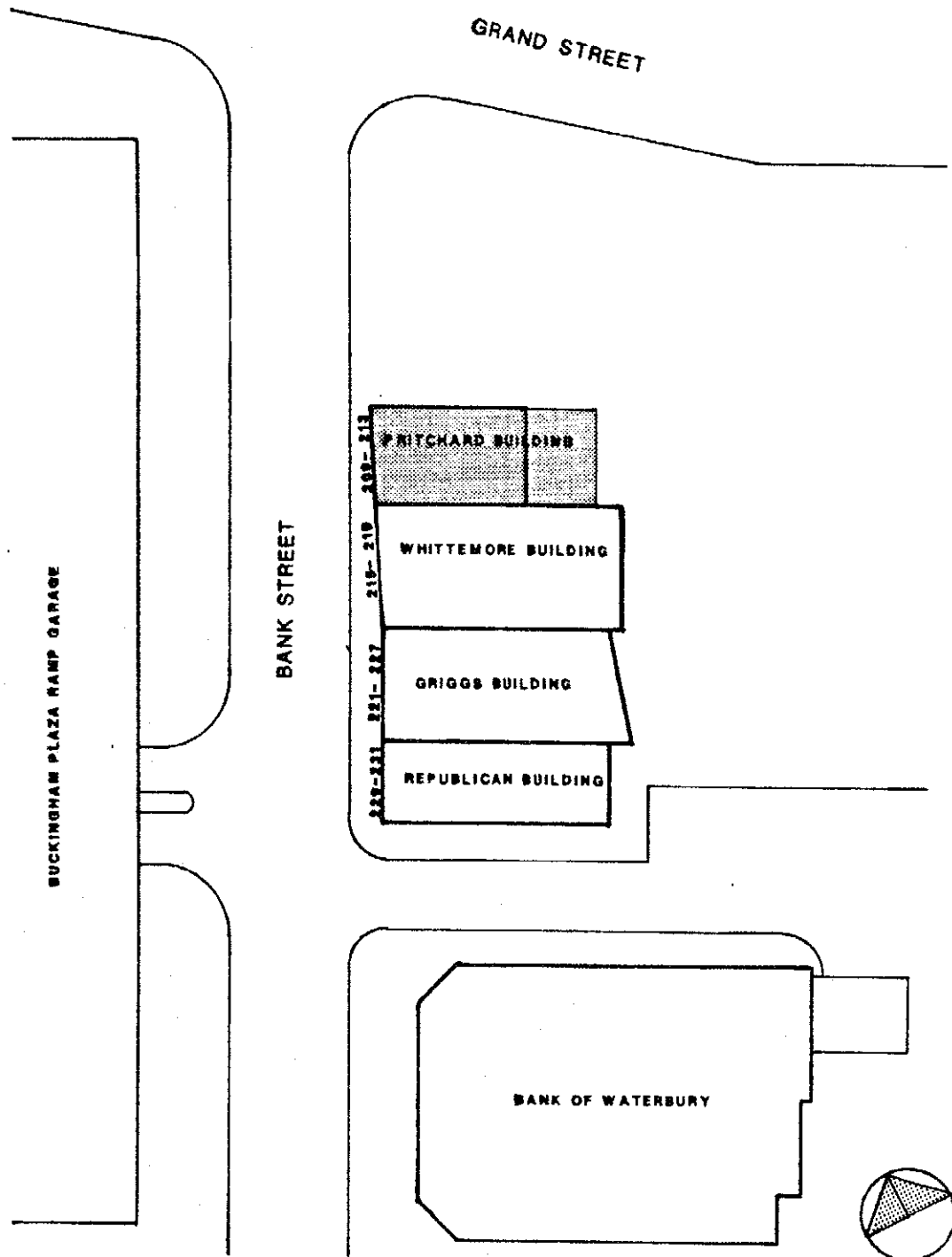
Section 106 mitigation required documentation of existing resources.

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Affiliation: Michael S. Stein, A.I.A.  
Date: September 1987

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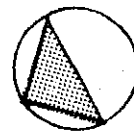
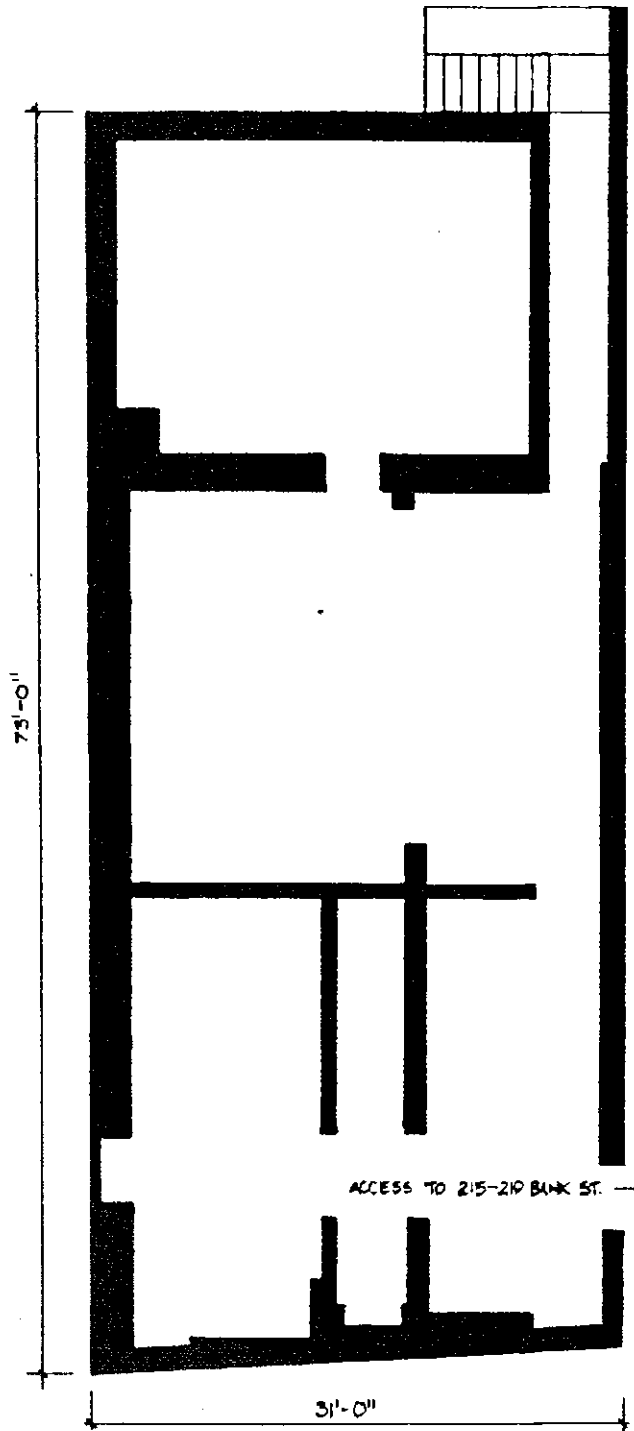
SITE PLAN

DATE: SEPT. 1987

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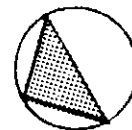
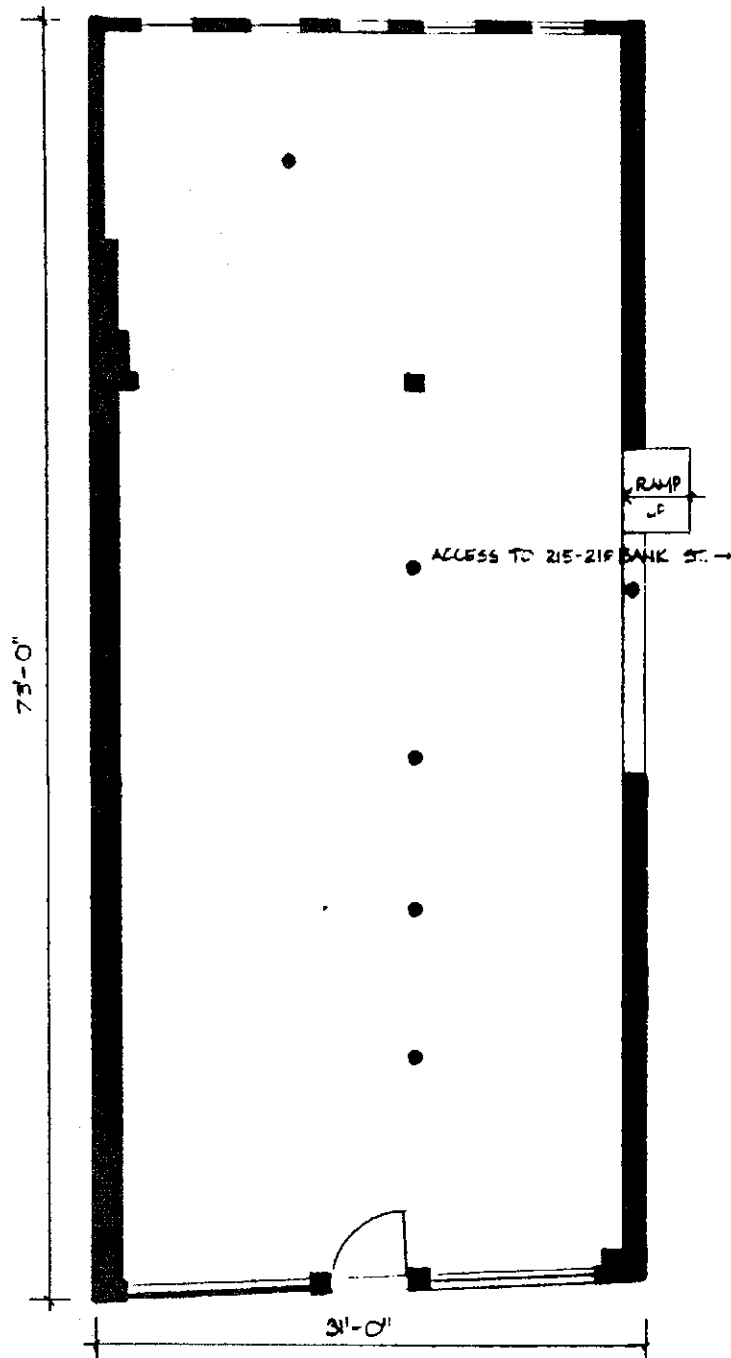
**BASEMENT PLAN**

**DATE: SEPT. 1987**

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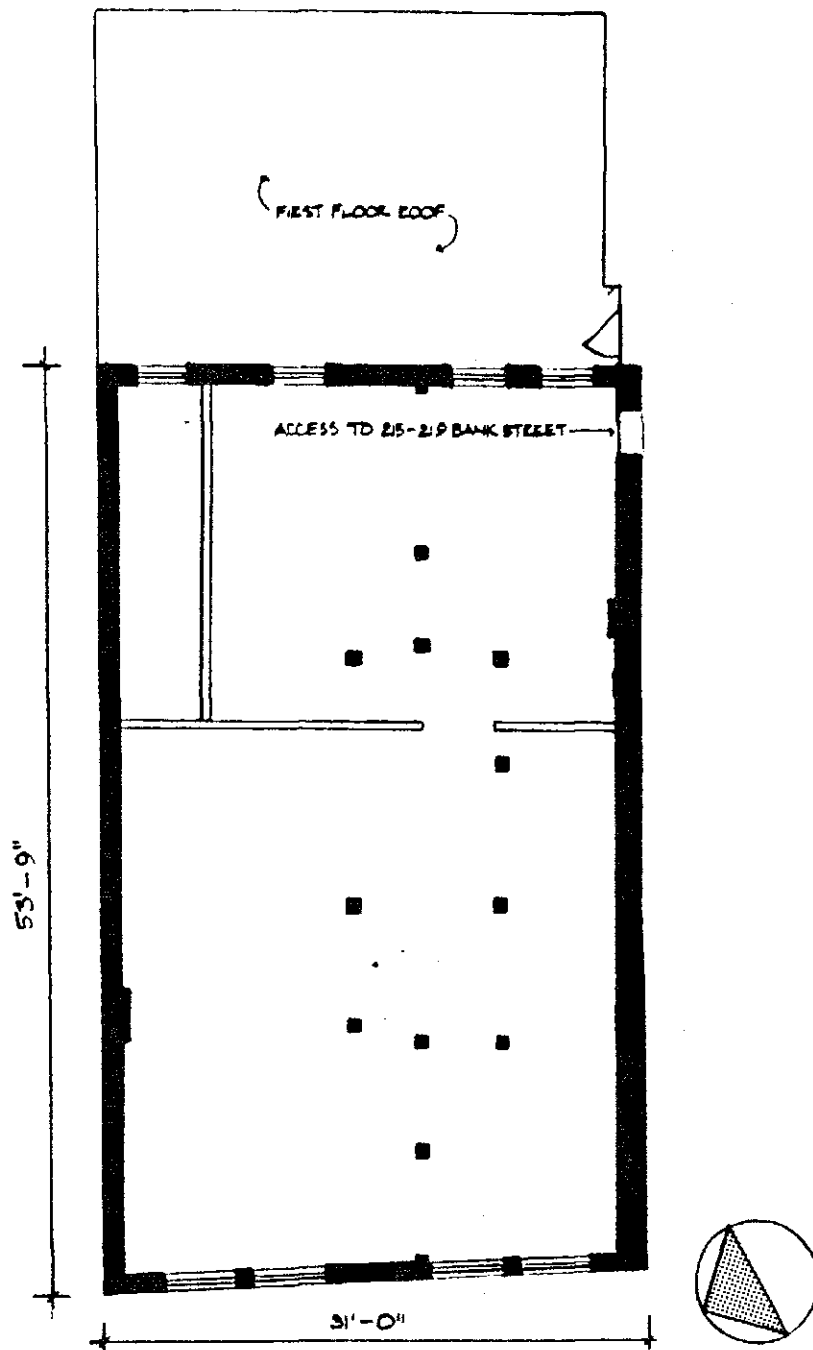
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN

DATE: SEPT. 1987



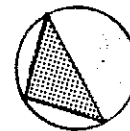
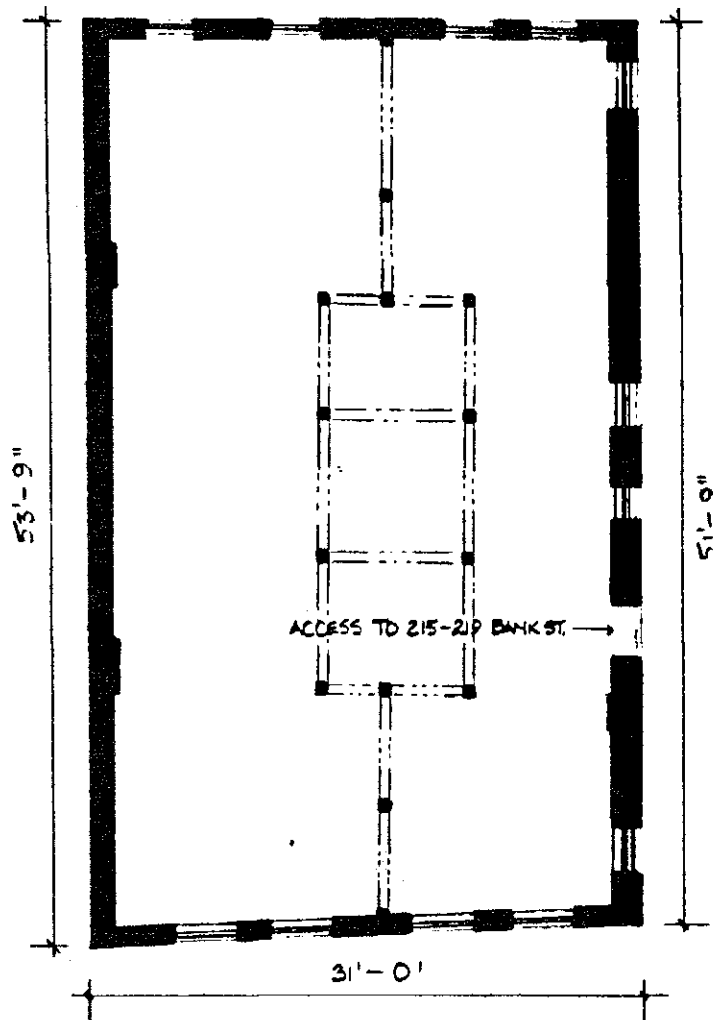
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

DATE: SEPT. 1987

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THIRD FLOOR PLAN

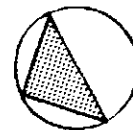
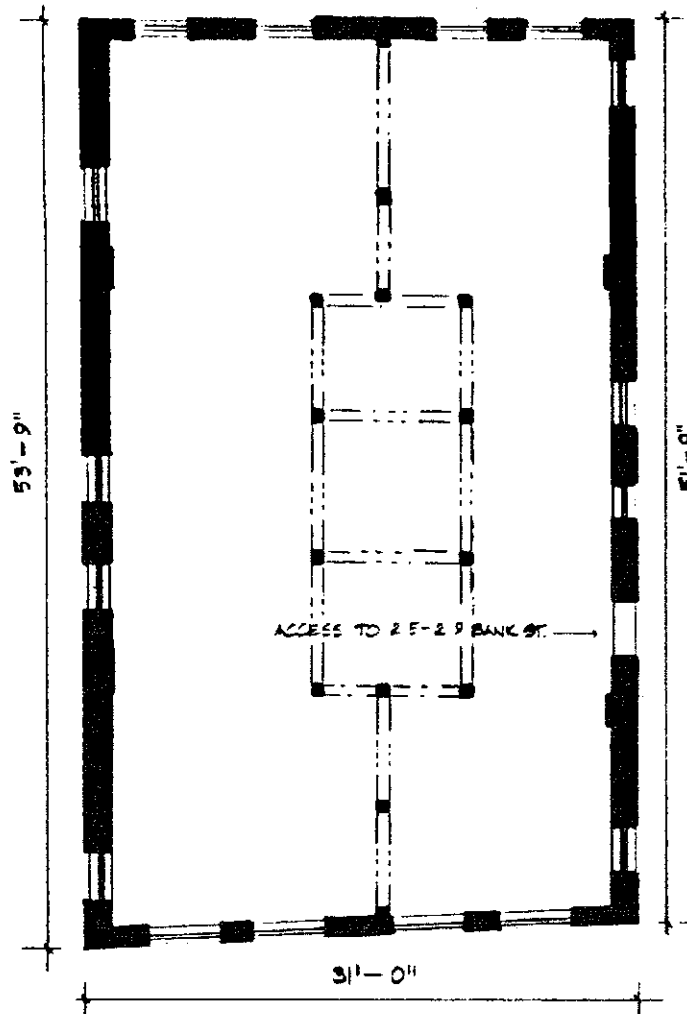
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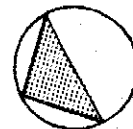
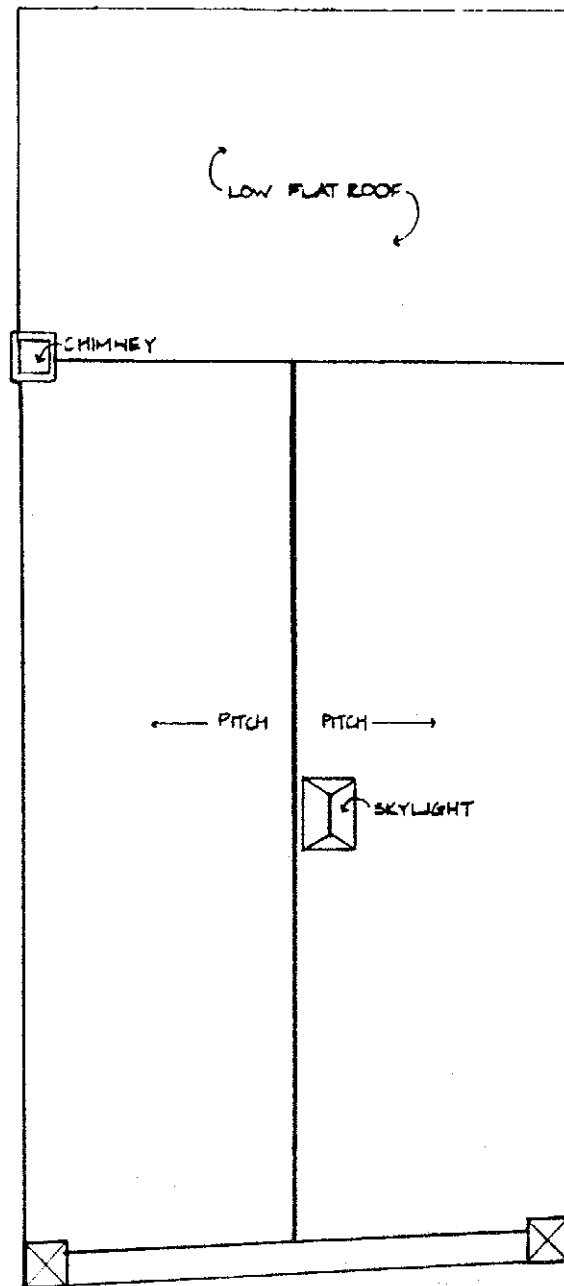
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FOURTH FLOOR PLAN

DATE: SEPT. 1987



ROOF PLAN

DATE: SEPT. 1987